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Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 00288 272308Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
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O 272235Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8106

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 0288

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XM, UY
SUBJ: POSTPONEMENT OF BUENOS AIRES MFM

REF: STATE 18525

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS FROM CHARGE

1. FONMIN BLANCO CALLED ME TO HIS OFFICE EVENING JAN 27. HE SAID HE HAD HOPED TO TALK TO ME SOONER IN GENERAL TERMS ABOUT TRADE ACT AND MFM, BUT CONVERSATION HE HAD ENVISAGED WAS NOW OUTDATED BY TALK HE HAD HAD WITH FONMIN VIGNES BY PHONE THISMORNING AND BY NOTE HE HAD RECEIVED IN MID-AFTERNOON FROM ARGENTINE EMBASSY ANNOUNCING POSTPONEMENT OF MFM SCHEDULED FOR MARCH.

2. BLANCO TOLD ME IN EMPHATIC TERMS THAT HE DEEPLY REGRETTED ARGENTINE DECISIO AND SAID HE HAD TOLD VIGNES IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO POSTPONE MFM. BLANCO GAVE FOLLOWING AS HIS AND GOU'S VIEWS AT THIS TIME: A) POSTPONEMENT OF MFM AND OAS ASSEMBLY CONSIDERATION OF TRADE ACT WILL ONLY LEAD TO CONFRONTATION; B) HE DOES NOT EXPECT DECISIONS AND CERTAINLY NOT ANY HELPFUL ONES TO COME OUT OF OAS; C) NOW THAT COUNCIL HAS ADOPTED RESOLUTION THAT IT DID, POSSIBILITY EXISTS FOR SHARPER RESOLUTION IN PARIL WHICH WOULD ONLY SERVE TO WIDEN BREACH; D) OAS CONSIDERATION WILL ALSO SERVE TO ALIGN LATIN AMERICA BEHIND VENEZUELAN LEADERSHIP; E) OAS FORUM WILL PRODUCE ONLY PREPARED SPEECHES AND DIATRIBES AND
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WILL NOT PERMIT SOBER DEBATE ON PROBLEMS AT ISSUE.

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3. BLANCO THEN READ TO ME TEXT OF ARGENTINE NOTE. IT REFERS TO "CONTINENTAL SITUATION" CREATED BY ENACTMENT OF TRADE ACT AND TO "SITUACION CONFLICTIVA" ARISING AS RESULT. AFTER QUOTING RESOLUTION ADOPTED "UNANIMOUSLY" IN WASHINGTON NOTE GOES ON TO SAY ARGENTINA FULLY SHARES AND SUPPORTS VIEWS EXPRESSED THEREIN. AS RESULT, AND AFTER CONSULTATIONS, GOA HAD DECIDED TO POSTPONE MFM.

4. AFTER SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN US ABOUT TRADE ACT ITSELF, BLANCO CONCLUDED BY STRESSING THAT IT HIGHLY IMPORTANT AND IN FACT CRITICAL AT THIS STAGE HEMISPHERIC RELATIONS TO GET MATTERS BACK IN PERSPECTIVE AND BACK ON THE TRACK. HE SAID HE HAD NO SUGGESTIONS TO OFFER IMMEDIATELY SINCE GOA'S DECISION JUST RECEIVED, BUT HOPED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS AND WOULD APPRECIATE ANY VIEWS WE HAVE. HE HOPED AMBASSADOR BOWDLER DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT MIGHT BRING SOME THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION.

5. BLANCO ALSO SPECULATE THAT SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT BY EX-ECUTIVE BRANCH IN DIRECTION OF AGREED INTERPRETATION OF TRADE ACT COMBINED WITH EFFORTS INITIATED TO AMEND ACT COULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN ADVANCE APRIL MEETING. I TOLD HIM EVEN IF THIS WERE DONE THERE WAS NOT MUCH CHANCE FOR CONCRETE ACTION BY APRIL. HE SAID HE COLD APPRECIATE THAT BUT OUTWARD EVIDENCE OF SUCH MOVEMENT WOULD BE HLEPFUL IN AND OF ITSELF.

6. I FOUND BLANCO GENUINELY WORRIED AND CONCERNED ABOUT IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE OF INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS. HE VIEWS APRIL MEETING AS LIKELY PRODUCE BACKWARD STEP THE WAY THINGS APPEAR BE SHAPING UP, AT LEAST AT THIS POINT IN TIME. HE HAS CONSISTENTLY MADE CLEAR HIS BELIEF IN NEW DIALOGUE, BUT WE SHOULD ALSO REMEMBER THAT WHILE GOU WILL DO WHAT IT CAN TO "SOFTEN" RIGID POSITIONS, IT CANNOT AFFORD STRAY TOO FAR FROM LA SOLIDARITY.
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